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COSTA RICA

DEPUTIES OPPOSE ROBERT VESCO'S APPLICATION FOR NATURALIZATION

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"What Robert Vesco and his advisers are trying to do is not to obtain Costa Rican citizenship but to escape the action of North American justice," Deputy Oscar Saborio Alvarado stated before leaving San Jose yesterday. He was referring to reports that the investor was trying to obtain nationality.

"As you know," Saborio Alvarado added, "I am compiling on my own account a useful report on the financial activities of Mr Vesco, and according to a document I have received originating with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission, what Robert Vesco is doing with his investments in our country is buying security.

"I can assure you of one thing," added the legislator Saborio Alvarado, "and this is that, with the interest that some of us deputies are taking in obtaining information, when the promised investigation into his activities is begun, the 34-year-old magnate who has become so well-known in the world for his speculations in mutual funds is going to find himself in difficulties. I can only trust that in the meantime the Civil Register does not rush matters and grant him nationality. I understand that Mr Vesco's legal advisers are trying to discover some way by which this controversial gentleman need not comply with the constitutional procedure of residing among us for 5 years. There is, in between, a request for an investigation of his activities, and this must be waited for no matter how great the resources of Vesco and company may be."

Investigation Necessary

There will be no alternative but to repeal Article 14 of Law 4812 on residents living on pensions or on income from investments in order that

Mr Vesco and his associates not find their own solution to obtaining a provisional Costa Rican passport," said deputy Jenaro Valverde Marin yesterday in referring to the aims of the North American businessman to acquire nationality or at least a Costa Rican passport.

Speaking with the political Constitution in his hand, the legislator Valverde Marin spelled out clause 4 of Article 14 of the Magna Charta, which specifies that all aliens other than Spaniards, Central Americans, or Latin Americans must have a 5-year period of residence in the country in order to apply for citizenship. "This is clear, this is decisive, and Mr Vesco is included in this rule on residence, since he is not a Latin American so far as we are aware. Let me make it plain that I shall in any case advocate that the law on resident pensioners be amended as soon as possible," Valverde Marin continued, "as it could be turned into a precedent for cases similar to that of Vesco and his friends.

"Additionally, the president of the Legislative Assembly, attorney Daniel Oduber Quiros, has promised that the congressional investigation will begin as soon as sessions are resumed on 12 January, and it seems to me the most elemental prudence that Vesco's application not be acted on until we see what the investigation supplies us. The charges of the United States Securities and Exchange Commission are serious and known to all, so why not wait a few days? People know that we are dealing with a delicate case, and it is the Assembly's duty to treat it as such, without undue haste, especially when the matter at hand is one in which there is much to discuss and not a simple application for nationalization," concluded Deputy Valverde Marin.

Denial of Passport Requested

Deputy Dr Longino Soto Pacheco stated that he had communicated with the Civil Register to request that Vesco not be granted a provisional passport.

"I said that Mr Vesco, on my request in the Legislative Assembly, will be investigated for his activities inside and outside the country, and that as this gentleman is presently under investigation by a United States federal commission for a crime severely categorized by the international press, I requested that his passport be withheld until such time as the facts are disclosed. As Norman Lablanc and Ulrich Strickler are Mr Vesco's partners, I had them included in my request to the Register."

Investigation To Be Held

The National Liberation deputies and those from other segments of the opposition told the press yesterday, "There will be an investigation, and a commission will be designated for this purpose that will be granted the widest powers for carrying out its task." Christian Democratic Deputy Jesus M. Fernandez Morales stated, "Look, in the Vesco case, all of us are determined to see that the facts are made clear, as it is essential to

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preserve the good name of the country even though we are dealing with investors. Also, the stories in reputable information media in regard to Mr Vesco cannot be ignored. There is an investigation pending in the United States, and we must accordingly proceed with caution insofar as his resources are concerned."

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